

concerns of every State, the Environmental Council of States, clearly states this will not do any such thing. Here is the Environmental Council of the States. Every State belongs to this, including California. It says in here:

This bill does not weaken the standards and allows each State to choose its best course on most of the matters detailed in the bill.

So there you have it. On this matter, the organization that represents all the environmental groups is strongly supporting this.

Will do nothing to increase energy independence? The reason the United States is vulnerable, in a vulnerable position, is because we don't have an adequate supply to meet the demand. Supply—that is what I have been talking about since we started talking here. Reducing demand is only one part of the equation. We want to reduce demand. We also want to increase supply.

I would say probably the most damaging thing that has been stated by the junior Senator—here is a quote by the senior Senator from California. When she talks about streamlining permitting, yes, that is one of the big problems. So I used a quote by Senator FEINSTEIN in a letter to Governor Schwarzenegger. I will read it again because I think maybe the junior Senator wasn't in the Chamber when I talked about this. This is a quote out of the letter:

I can see where a cumbersome permitting process, with uncertain outcomes, would make it difficult to plan and implement projects . . . I encourage you to improve the speed and predictability of the permitting process, and believe that this will allow business and government to focus their limited resources on actions that most benefit the environment.

That is exactly what we want to do. That is a very acute observation by the senior Senator from California.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I was not aware that Senator FEINSTEIN was supporting your amendment. Is that what you are suggesting?

Mr. INHOFE. This is a quote. Would you like me to read it again?

Mrs. BOXER. I would like you to read it again.

Mr. INHOFE. I will read it again.

Mrs. BOXER. I would really like that because you are implying that she supports your amendment.

Mr. INHOFE. No, no; I am saying she is concerned about the permitting process.

Mrs. BOXER. We all are. That doesn't mean we support your amendment. Go ahead, read it again.

Mr. INHOFE. "I can see where a cumbersome permitting process, with uncertain outcomes, would make it difficult to plan and implement projects . . . I encourage you to improve the speed and predictability of the permitting process, and believe that this will allow business and government to focus their limited resources on actions that most benefit the environment."

This is exactly what this bill does. We have a section in here that allows States, if they want to do it—and there is nothing wrong with allowing States to do what they see is in their best interests. I agree with Senator FEINSTEIN that this would allow States to overcome this cumbersome permitting process, as she states in her statement.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, if I might say, I appreciate hearing that. It has nothing to do with this particular amendment, which, basically, is a give-away to the energy companies at a time when they are making a fortune.

We have a Federal Clean Air Act. We have it for a reason: Air goes from one State to another, one region to another. That is what we have. It is a Federal Clean Air Act. This was passed under Republican and Democratic administrations, over and over again. This is what the people want.

Do they want streamlining of permits? Yes. We all do. I was a county supervisor. I did a lot of my work streamlining permits. That doesn't mean backing off on protecting the people you represent and making sure you have an adequate timeframe to ascertain what are the pollutants that are going to come out of the smokestacks here. What are the diseases that could follow if these pollutants get into the lungs of the people?

This is an amendment which hides behind the word "streamlining." But what it really does, it waives environmental laws.

Yes, I know a lot about this particular amendment. I have to say, the Senator from Oklahoma talks about these local redevelopment authorities—you could have 10 people from oil companies on those redevelopment authorities. You could. So you cannot stand here and tell me this is protective of the public interest.

We have an amendment which has been offered as some kind of a fix to the lack of refineries. You take a look at our refineries. I think the Senator from Washington is aware of this. They remind us a lot of the problems we had with Enron. They keep taking power offline, shutting down the refineries for so-called maintenance, at higher and higher levels. And when Shell Oil had a chance to expand a refinery or keep it going, they chose to shut it down.

My friend doesn't think the refinery companies, I guess, are making enough money. They are making record profits. He wants to give them land for nothing. He says it goes to a redevelopment agency. Yet there is no protection for the public there. At the end of the day, these companies are getting it for free, whether they are getting it from the Federal Government directly to them or the Federal Government through a redevelopment agency. Environmental laws are waived. People in this country will not be protected. It is a backdoor way to repeal part of the Clean Air Act at a time when people are dying of particulate matter.

Now, if you are on Indian land, you get that land, and you get reimbursed

100 percent for the plant. So my friend can get up and say: I didn't read it. And he could read me a quote from my friend, Senator FEINSTEIN, who, as far as I know, is not supporting his amendment. I mean, it is a very tricky thing. I can hold up a statement from Senator DOMENICI and say: Look at this statement.

I can hold up a statement from every Republican from a speech they made saying how important it is that the people be protected from lung cancer. That has nothing to do with this amendment. It is a good debating tactic, but at the end of the day this amendment failed in the Environment Committee when the Senator from Oklahoma had the gavel, and this amendment would clearly have failed in the committee when I was holding the gavel.

So the fact is, what we are trying to do in this particular legislation is gather around amendments that have been voted out of committee in a bipartisan fashion, that were not contentious, like this one; that are not argumentative, like this one; and that are very unclear and are going in uncharted waters, like this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Let me respond again. The distinguished junior Senator from California can say over and over and over again as many times as she wants that it is giving money to oil companies. It is not.

Specifically, the EDA portion provides grants to local communities if they want them. If the local community doesn't want them, they don't have to have them.

At this point in the RECORD I want to have printed a letter from the EDA that says:

No for-profit entity is eligible to receive EDA assistance.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
ADMINISTRATION,

Washington, DC, October 21, 2005.

Hon. JAMES M. INHOFE,  
Chair, Committee on Environment and Public  
Works, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN INHOFE: This letter responds to the Committee on Environment and Public Works' request on October 19, 2005 for clarification on the Economic Development Administration's ("EDA") mission and entities that are eligible to receive EDA assistance, as well as additional information on EDA's past involvement in base realignment and closure ("BRAC") rounds.

EDA's mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. To implement this mission, EDA is directed by its authorizing statute, the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended ("PWEDA"), to foster economic growth by "empowering local and regional communities experiencing chronic high unemployment and low per capita income to develop